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Source: *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1968), pp. 123-132

Published by: American Oriental Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/597906>

Accessed: 31/01/2010 15:21

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LITERARY STYLE IN FIRST MILLENNIUM MESOPOTAMIA

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STUDENTS OF THE LATE E. A. SPEISER often speak of his feeling for literature, which he disseminated in his teaching perhaps even more than in his publications. It is fitting, then, that this paper, composed in his memory, should be concerned with style. The term 'literary style' must be qualified for ancient Mesopotamia, since the cumbersome writing system restricted literacy to a highly trained corps of professional scribes, and any 'literary' composition would inevitably be comprehended with the ears, rather than the eyes, by most who made its acquaintance. Indeed, there is every reason to assume that 'literature' began entirely orally, and that when writing was invented and texts were written down the oral aspects of it continued exactly as before. We are in no position to be more specific, but a mention of this presumption is called for.

The first literary texts from Mesopotamia are Sumerian and date from the middle of the Third Millennium, from the sites of Fara and Tell Salabih mainly.¹ Too little of them is understood to permit any study of style, but they are the earliest witnesses to a development in Sumerian which was not finally exhausted until about 1,000 B. C. The development of Akkadian literature may well have been stimulated by the Old Akkadian dynasty (c. 2,300-2,200 B. C.), which made use of Semitic in royal inscriptions and generally seems to have provoked a cultural ferment. However, too little from this period remains in the way of Akkadian literature, and the next blossoming of culture, under the Third Dynasty of Ur, was, perhaps as a reaction, distinctly Sumerian. The break-up of this dynasty under the immigrating Amorites c. 2,000 B. C. was the time when Akkadian literature really began to develop, and three basic influences on its style can be traced. The first was the every-day language, Babylonian, known to us from many letters. The syntax of this dialect was largely Sumerian, with the verb at the end of its clause or sentence. But

its Semitic connexions are unknown, since it differs widely from Old Akkadian, but shows no real Amorite influence. The second influence is the formal Sumerian style. The phraseology of royal inscriptions, to take the clearest example, was largely traditional and had been Sumerian in the first place. It remained Sumerian during the Isin-Larsa period, but starting with Hammurabi the inscriptions were generally issued in both Sumerian and Babylonian versions, which normally correspond almost word for word. In this way Akkadian absorbed Sumerian syntax, phraseology, and nuances. The same happened in other spheres. Much Sumerian religious language passed over into Akkadian in quite literal renderings. The third influence on style in the development of Akkadian literature was that of Old Akkadian. What had been ordinary language in that dialect was employed as high falutin by Old Babylonian *literati*. This applied particularly to vocabulary and to certain endings, especially the locative *-um* and the 'adverbial' *-iṣ*, which were no longer current in the Old Akkadian uses. Whether Old Babylonian poetic line patterns were taken over from the Old Akkadian period cannot yet be ascertained for lack of evidence. It does seem that behind the Old Babylonian poetic scene there is the influence of a Semitic poetry, like that from Ras Shamra, employing a short line. Both the Sumerian and the Old Akkadian influences helped to remove literary productions away from everyday speech, but hymns show these influences much more than epics.

As the Second Millennium passed the impact of all three sources of influence on style lessened. The development of academic learning resulted in a rejection of ordinary language forms as a suitable medium for literature. Old Akkadian had given what it could, and it could give nothing more. Sumerian was still a living tradition in the sense that texts were being composed in it, but it was increasingly under the influence of literary Akkadian. Thus the development of literary style in the second half of the Second Millen-

¹ See M. Civil and R. D. Biggs, *RA* 60 1-16.

nium could no longer depend on its old sources of inspiration and the tradition became inbred, relying on scholarship to create effect with abstruse words and archaisms (real or invented).

In the First Millennium the traditional style continued with amazing vigour. Assyrian royal inscriptions from the time of Sargon II onwards, and the royal inscriptions of Nabonidus are the best known and largest blocks of material, but no doubt there are many literary compositions belonging to this period which simply cannot be dated with certainty. At the best this style is immensely varied in expression despite the very few neologisms permitted, and the hankering for rare words and archaisms is less marked than before. At the worst it is a stock of hackneyed phrases and clichés. However, alongside the traditional style, a new kind of literary writing developed, though comparatively few texts reflect it, and they have been little studied. Three good specimens are the so-called Love Lyrics (*JSS* IV 1 ff.); *STT* 360; and Sumer XIII 119-121 (praise of Nabû and Tašmētum). In these and similar texts there is a clear break with tradition and often a certain lyricism enters them. Since the purpose of the present article is chiefly to present two First Millennium texts in the traditional style, this 'art nouveau' will not be pursued further. Indeed, it made little headway, unless perhaps it was related to suspected developments in Aramaic which have not survived. The traditional style was amply maintained.²

² This persistence of tradition makes dating by style, except in a very general way, extremely hazardous. The recent attempt of I. M. Diakonoff (*AS* 16 343-349) to reassert his previous dating of a text to the lifetime of Merodach-baladan II to a large extent on the basis of phraseology must be considered unsuccessful. The argument is that a large number of technical terms in the *Advice to a Prince* either first or only occur in the royal inscriptions of Sargon and Sennacherib. However, on looking through the list of examples, it appears that quite a few of the words and phrases are poetic or literary, and not technical terms, e.g. *mūrnisqu* for "horse" and *katrā* "present." It has long been known that Assyrian royal inscriptions from the time of Sargon II and onwards suddenly introduce a large amount of poetic phraseology (von Soden, *ZA* 40 174³), and the lack of many of these terms in earlier Assyrian inscriptions merely illustrates this fact, but provides no criterion for dating *per se*. *tupšikka zabālu* is quoted as first occurring in Sennacherib, but it has just appeared in the second line of the Old Babylonian *Atrahasis* (*CT* 46 1 i 2). The risks of such arguments from silence need no underlining. Also some of the evidence

The first text given here dates from the unsettled period of Babylonian history in the first half of the eighth century B.C. either from, or just after the reign of Nabû-šum-iškun. It was written at the command of Nabû-šum-imbi, commander (*šākin tēmi*) of Borsippa, to record his rebuilding of a storehouse in the Ezida complex. The concluding rubric informs us that this was an inscription in the wall of Ezida. The text we have is in two columns written around a solid clay barrel. It first names Nabû with abundant epithets (Col. Ia), and then moves to the appointment of the city commander and his decision to rebuild the storehouse (Ib 1-15). However, work was interrupted by an attack on the city by Arameans and the inhabitants (also Aramean?) of Dilbat, in which the city commander offered stout resistance (the rest of Ib and IIa). In the gap in column II no doubt victory over the enemy and the completion of the building were described, so that the final section of the inscription is reserved for the traditional request to the gods concerned (in this case Nabû and Tašmētum) for a blessing on their benefactor.

The importance of this text from a literary point of view lies in the evidence it offers for the continuity of literary effort during the dark ages when the Arameans were troubling the country. The city commander of Borsippa could put out a competent piece of writing loaded down with conventional phraseology. It shows no particular striving for special effect, but the use of *dušmû* "slave" in Ib 11 was surely conditioned by a desire to avoid the usual *ardu*, a word used on the streets.

Historically the inscription is of equal importance, showing a city commander close to Babylon, yet fighting his own war and writing his

is forced. As a parallel to *dekût ummān māti* in the *Advice*, *dekût māti* is quoted from one passage in Sennacherib. Apart from the problem of creating a technical term from one known example, it would be equally relevant to quote *dakût ummānātiya* from Shalmaneser I (*KAH* I 13 i 30), more than 500 years earlier! Of the actual technical terms, that are not just timeless poetic language, on Diakonoff's own evidence the first occurrences are long before Sargon II, e.g. *šatam ēkurri* occurs in a text from the reign of Nabû-mukin-apli c. 950 B.C. (*BBSt* p. 68 31), and again in a text from c. 750 of Nabû-šum-iškun (*VAS* I 36 iii 9, not ii 18 as given; the passage from Marduk-zākir-šumi given, *RA* XVI 125 ii 28, is irrelevant, as it has *šatammu* alone, not *šatam ēkurri*).

own quasi-royal inscription. The idea that he was a nominee of Assyria (last repeated by A. R. Millard, *Iraq* XXVI 30) is based on nothing more than a misreading of his father's name Ēda-ētir as Aššur! The commander is also named, with the same title and parent, in the only other major document from this generation, and also from Borsippa, *VAS* I 36 iii 6.³ It is not certain that the cylinder edited here is a contemporary document, as assumed by J. Brinkman, *JCS* 16 100. It could perfectly well have been copied from the wall by some one with antiquarian interest under the Late Babylonian empire. Its orthography does not always agree with the certainly original text, *VAS* I 36. There the suffixed *-ma* is always so written, but in our text it is normally written *-mi*, as in other Late Babylonian documents. The barrel form does not necessarily mean that it was buried at the corner of the building, since there

are one or two Late Babylonian examples of barrels of purely religious content.

The text was first made known by S. A. Strong in *JRAS* 1892 350-368, in an edition quite acceptable for the time, though far from adequate for today. Hugo Winckler also began to make a copy while in London, but was forced to leave before he had finished it. Nevertheless he published an edition of as much as he had copied, in *Alt-orientalische Forschungen* I 254-263, declaring (quite wrongly) that there was nothing of consequence after the point at which he broke off, and omitting a whole line (IIa 8) by *homoeoteleuton*. Accordingly a new edition is given here, based on the prism itself, collated by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum, so that in quite a number of points the text given differs from those of Strong and Winckler. Signs marked with an asterisk are no longer preserved on the original.

BM 33428 = Rm III 105

Column Ia

- 1 [xxxxx(x)]-ni-šu kabtu(idim) šar-ḫi ^dmu-dūg-ga-sa₄-a šá-qí-i e-tel-^lli¹
- 2 [xx] ^dnin-sig₅-ga ka-nu-ut ^dištarāti(muš)^{mes} be-let da-ad-mi šá-ga-pu-ur-ti i-lat
[p]aḫ gim-ri
- 3 [^dut]-u₂-lu bēlu gaš-ri šá i-na ma-ḥar ilāni^{mes} kal-šú-nu il-la-ka ḥar-^lra¹-ni
- 4 [xx] ilāni^{mes} gīt-ma-li šu-pu-ú na-ram ^dnin-ši-kù
- 5 [xx n] é-me-qí ù ši-tul-ti muš-ta-bi-li te-re-e-ti
- 6 [xx(x)]x šarru-ú-ti mu-ma'-ir gim-ri na-din ^{giš}ḥaṭṭi ^{giš}kussî u palê^e a-ge-e
šarru-ú-ti
- 7 [xx(x)]x ^dnu-nam-nir gīt-ma-li māru kun-nu-ú i-lit-ti ru-bat ilāni^{mes}
^de-ru-u₈-ú-a
- 8 [xx(x)]x é-sag-íl bēl gim-ri šit-lu-tu na-ram ^dmarduk
- 9 [xx ^das]ar-re aplu(ibila) reš-tu-ú a-šá-red a-lik maḥ-ri šá it-ti a-bi
a-li-di-š[ú . . .]xxxx-ti
- 10 [xxx d]ayyān ilāni^{mes} šar ilāni^{mes} rabûti^{mes} šá i-na ši-taš u šil-la-an šu-[pu-ú . . .
- 11 [xx ilā]ni^{mes} ma-lik rama-ni-šú le-qu-ú un-ni-ni še-mu-ú tés-li-ti rap-šú
uz-[ni . . .
- 12 [ša a-na u]r-ti-šú ka-bit-ti ^di-gi-gi ap-pi i-lab-bi-nu-šú ^da-nun-na-ki x[. . .
- 13 . . .] melammi(me.lám) ellûti^{mes} ḥa-lip na-mur-ra-ti šá pul-ḥa-a-ti
ma-lu-[ú . . .
- 14 . . .-š]u? i-šak-ka-nu šip-tu u ^dsibitti(imin.bi) la i-šak-[. . .
- 15 . . .-s]u-ú a-la-li ina qar-ba-a-ti mu-al-lid AN x[. . .
- 16 . . .]x-ti šá-ki-nu nuḥši(hé.nun) tuḥ-da u meš-re-e a-[na . . .
- 17 . . .] x x [x] x x ilāni^{mes} rabûti^{mes} [. . .
- 18 . . .] ú-šam-mi-ḫi ú-[. . .
- 19 . . .]x la iš-šá-an-na-n[i . . .
- 20 . . .] ti ma x x x [. . .

[about twenty lines missing]

³ A hitherto unnoticed fragment from the same generation and Borsippa is the part of an inscribed agate eye, L. Delaporte, *Musée du Louvre, Catalogue des*

Cylindres Orientaux II, A 829. Cf. its reverse with *VAS* I 36 iii 19.

Column Ib

- 1 x x x [. . .
 2 šu-te-šur ni-š[i . . .
 3 a-na bād.si.ab.b[a . . .
 4 i-šad-di-ḫi ú-ru-u[ḫ . . .
 5 áš-ruk-ka-ti šu-a-ti [. . .
 6 ú-raš ta-na-da-a-ti si/ḫab* ma* [. . .
 7 šá áš-ruk-ka-ti šu-a-ti i*-na* x* [. . .
 8 i-qu-pu-ú-mi i-ni-šu i[l xxxxxx] en [. . .
 9 šá ul-tu u₄-mi pa-ni ul-tu ul-la-nu-¹ú¹-a ^{1a}šākin tēmi (gar umuš) ^{1a}qé-pi
 b[ād.si.ab.ba]
 10 la i-pu-šu šip-ri šu-a-ti ia-a-ši ^{md}nabû(nà)-šùm-im-bi mār ^{mē}ēda-ētir(aš.s[ur])
 11 ^{1a}i-šak-ki ^{1a}ērīb bīt (ku₄ é) ^dnabû ^{1a}šākin tēmi bār-síp^{ki} du-uš-mu-ú pa-līḫ
 ilu-ú-ti-šú
 12 ra-bi-ti na-an-za-az maḫ-ri-šu re-du-ú mut-nin-nu-ú
 13 ¹šá¹ a-na pa-ra-aš ^dnabû bēl mātāti(kur.kur) bēl i-lī pu-tuq-qu sa-an-tak
 14 šip-ri šá-a-ši ú-qa-a-a-an-ni-mi ú-šad-gūl pa-ni-ia
 15 šip-ri šá-a-ši ú-šar-ri-i-mi e-pe-šú aq-bi iš-šá-ak-na-a-mi
 16 i-na bār-síp^{ki} āl kit-ti ù mé-šá-ri e-šá-a-ti dal-ḫa-a-ti si-ḫi
 17 ù saḫ-ma-šá-a-ti i-na palē^e ^dnabû-šùm-iš-kun šarri mār ^{mda}ku-ri
 18 ^{1a}bābīlā'a(din.tir^{ki.mēš}) ^{1a}barsipā'a(bār.síp^{ki.mēš}) uru^{du}-te-e-ti kišād ^{1d}puratti^{ki}
 19 gab-bi uru^{kal}-du ^{1a}a-ra-mi ^{1a}dīlbatā'a(dil.bat^{ki.mēš}) ūmī^{mēš} ma-'du-ú-ti
 20 a-na lib-bi a-ḫa-meš ^{giš}kakki-šú-nu i-še-el-li a-ḫa-meš ú-ra-sa-a-pu
 21 ¹ú¹ it-ti ^{1a}barsipā'a(bār.síp^{ki.mēš}) i-na muḫḫi eqlēti^{mēš}-šú-nu ip-pu-šú šu-la-a-ti
 22 [x(x)]xxx ^{md}nabû-šùm-idđina(si^{na}) mār ^{ma}aqar-^dnabû ^{1a}ērīb bīt ^dnabû ^{1a}šā-tam
 é-zi-da
 23 [xxx]xxx i-na rama-ni-šú i-na muḫḫi ^{md}nabû-šùm-im-bi mār ^{mē}ēda-ētir ^{1a}šākin
 tēmi bār-síp^{ki} iš-kun

Column IIa

- 1 i-na šat mu-ši ki-ma šar-ra-ḡi-iš nak-ri a-ḫa ^{1a}ḫa-[za-an-ni . . .
 2 za-ma-nu-ú lem-nu-ú-ti su-ku-ku-ú-ti la še-mi-ia-ma eg-[ru-ti . . .
 3 a-na é-zi-da ú-tir-mi é-zi-da ù bār-síp^k[i . . .
 4 iš-ba-tu-mi muḫḫi āli ù é-kur ri-ig-mi ù ši-s[i-ti]
 5 iš-kun-ú-mi ip-pu-šú šu-la-a-ti ù bīt ^{md}nabû-šùm-[im-bi mār ^{mē}ēda-ētir]
 6 ^{1a}šākin tēmi bār-síp^{ki} i-na mu-ši-šú-mi ^{1a}barsipā'a(bār.síp^{ki.mēš}) ù ^{1a}x[. . .
 7 šá a-na re-šu-ut a-ḫa-meš iz-zi-zu il-mu-ú-mi ina til-pa-na u ^{1giš}x[. . . ul-tu
 li-la-a-ti]
 8 adi na-pa-ḫi ^dšamšī^{ši} ip-pu-šú ta-nu-qa-a-ti ul-tu li-l[a-a-ti]
 9 a-di na-pa-ḫi ^dšamšī^{ši} ^{md}nabû-šùm-im-bi mār ^{mē}ēda-ētir ^{1a}šākin tēmi bār-s[ip^{ki} . . .
 10 . . .]x-ti ú-šal-li ^dnabû x x x-ú-a ia-'nu [. . .
 11 . . .] x x x ba [. . .
 [about thirty lines missing]

Column IIb

- 1 . . .]x-šú-nu x[. . .
 2 . . .] (vacat) [. . .
 3 . . .]xxx[xx]x iš-ru-pu xx[. . .
 4 . . .]x-si nu-uḫ-ši ¹ú a-na¹ x[. . .
 5 . . .]x ú x-ra-a-nu áš-ruk-k[a-ti . . .
 6 . . .] ^{md}nabû-šùm-im-¹bi¹ mār ^{mē}ēda-ētir ^{1a}šākin tēmi [bār-síp^{ki}]

- 7 . . . p]a-li-ḫi-šú n[a]-an-za-az ma[h-ri-šú . . .
 8 . . . ilu-ú]-ti-šú ra-bi-ti liq-bu-[ú . . .
 9 . . .]x lim-gur sa-li-mi dumqi(sig₅) x[. . .
 10 [a-na ši-rik-ti liš]-ruk-šú ù a-na qiš-ti [li-qis-su . . .
 11 . . .]x^{meš} dbe-let dištarāti(iš.tar)^{meš} [. . .
 12 . . .] AN il-ti reme-né-ti ba-na-[at . . .
 13 . . .]x mit-gu-rat a-mat-si ši-i[t pi-i-šá]
 14 [la ut-tak-ka-ru l]a in-nen-nu-ú qí-bi[t-si . . .
 15 ¹i-na ma-ḥar¹ [xxx]x pa-ri-is purussî šamê^e ù [eršetim^{tim} . . .
 16 mār ^{den}líl[l ilāni^{meš} ¹u₄¹-mi-šam lit-tas-qar a-bu-[ti . . .
 17 lu-ú-uš-šib [xxxx] ¹u₄-mī(?)^{meš} rūqūti(sù)^{meš} šanāti(mu)^{meš} [. . .
 18 ba-laṭ na-mar [xxxxxx] a-na ši-rik-t[i . . .
 19 pir'u(nunuz) lu-ú-[xxx(x) na]-¹an-na-bu¹ x[. . .
 20 i-na ékal [xxx(x)]x lu mit-gu-rat a-mat-si x[. . .
 21 it-ti é-z[i-da ù] bār-síp^{ki} li-ku-un re-¹é¹-[us-su . . .
 22 li-ti-ib [at-m]u-šú eli šār ilāni^{meš} bēl bēlē(en.en) tal-lak-t[i . . . é-zi-da]
 23 ù bār-síp^{ki} i]-na ma-ḥar ^{dnab}u ^{dn}a-na-a ilāni^{meš} šur-bu-t[i . . .
 24 liš-ba-a lit-t[u-tu] i-na šá-áš-mi qab-li tāḫazi dan-nu ù a-lak [šēri . . .
 25 ša-a-ši pir'u-¹šú x(x)]xx-šú re-šu-us-si a-la-ki šum-qut x [. . .
 26 nuḫšū(hé.nun) ma x[x(x)] hegalla(hé.gál) ma-²-da li-ma-al-la-a qātā^{II}-šú
 i-n[a . . .
 27 ù i-na [x]x ^{dēr}-ra šal-ba-bi mār ^{den}líl ra-a-mi ga-á[š-ru(?) . . .
 28 pat-ri šip-[ti] la iteḫḫi(te)-šú šá-lim-ti lu šá-ak-na-si a-a-bi-šú lem-nu-ú-[ti . . .
 29 bul-l[a-šu]n ki-ma la-²-mi ilu-ú-ti-ku-nu ù nar-bi-[ku-nu lid-lul]
 30 a-na [ni]š^{meš} dar-ka-a-ti at-ta-mi bēlu lu tuk-la-šu NAB[. . .
 31 i-bi šu-uš-šú a-na u₄-mi da-ru-ú-ti ta-nit-ti-[ku-nu . . .
 32 ik-ri-bi u šu-le-e šá ^{md}nabû-šum-im-bi ^{la}šākin ṭēmi bār-síp^{ki} ^{dnab}u . . .
 33 musarû(mu.sar) šá áš-ruk-ka-ti šá du-ru é-zi-da

Column Ia

- 1 [To . . .]. . the venerable, the magnificent, Muduggasa'a, the lofty, the noble,
 2 [spouse of] Ninsigga, the favoured one among the goddesses, mistress of human
 habitations, the warrior, goddess of the whole of everything,
 3 Utulu, the mighty lord, who pursues his way before all the gods,
 4 the supreme [. . .] of the gods, resplendent, beloved of Ninšiku,
 5 [endowed with] wisdom and counsel, who controls ordinances,
 6 [. . .]. of kingship, who directs everything, who gives the sceptre, throne, mace,
 and royal tiara,
 7 supreme [offspring] of Nunamnir, the favoured son, child of Eru'a, the lady
 of the gods,
 8 [. . .] of Esagil, lord of everything, the victor, beloved of Marduk,
 9 [. . .] of Asare, firstborn heir, the foremost, he who goes in front, who, with
 the father who begat him [. . .].
 10 [. . .], judge of the gods, king of the great gods, who in East and West is
 resplendent [. . .
 11 [. . . of the] gods, his own counsellor, who accepts prayer and hearkens to
 petitions, of great intelligence [. . .
 12 [at whose] solemn ordinance the Igigi express submission and the Anunnaki
 [. . .
 13 . . . clad in] a pure aura, robed in terror, filled with fearfulness [. . .
 14 . . .]. establishes judgment and the Sibitti do not [. . .

- 15 . . . who has] the work song sung in the fields, who begets . . [. . .
 16 . . .]. . who establishes abundance, prosperity and wealth for [. . .
 17 . . .]. .[.]. . the great gods [. . .
 18 . . .] made prosperous .[. . .
 19 . . .]. is not equalled [. . .
 20 . . .].[. . .

[about twenty lines missing]

Column Ib

- 1 . . .[. . .
 2 to direct the people aright [. . .
 3 to Borsippa [. . .
 4 who goes in procession on the road [. . .
 5 this storehouse [. . .
 6 a praiseworthy structure . .[. . .
 7 of this storehouse in .[. . .
 8 which was weak and falling down .[.].[. . .
 9 which (task) no commanding supervisor of [Borsippa] from time immemorial,
 from before my era,
 10 had done, to me Nabû-šum-imbi, son of Ēda-ētir,
 11 city-governor, privileged to enter the temple of Nabû, commander of Borsippa,
 the slave who reverences his great
 12 godhead, who stands at his service, the pious soldier
 13 who constantly heeds the decrees of Nabû, Lord of the Lands, lord of the gods,
 14 he entrusted that task and made me responsible.
 15 I put that task in hand and commanded that it be done. In Borsippa,
 16 the city of truth and justice, there came upon me troubles and disturbances,
 revolt
 17 and acts of violence. In the reign of king Nabû-šum-iškun, of the Bit Dakkuri
 tribe,
 18 the Babylonians, the Borsippeans, (the people of) Dutēti on the bank of the
 Euphrates,
 19 all the Chaldeans and Arameans and the people of Dilbat for many days
 20 hurled their weapons against each other and slaughtered each other.
 21 They also engaged in hostilities with the Borsippeans over their fields
 22 [. .]. . Nabû-šum-iddina, son of Aqar-Nabû, privileged to enter the temple
 of Nabû, provost of Ezida,
 23 [. . .]. . . by himself he . . Nabû-šum-imbi, son of Ēda-ētir, commander
 of Borsippa.

Column IIa

- 1 By night the enemy, the foreigner, the mayor (?) [. . .
 2 the evil, deaf foe, who did not obey me, perverse (?) [. . .
 3 I turned to Ezida and Ezida and Borsippa [. . .
 4 They seized and set up a hue and cry over the city and the temple
 5 as they engaged in hostilities. By night the Borsippeans and the men of .[. . .]
 6 who were there to help each other, surrounded the house of Nabû-šum-[imbi,
 son of Ēda-ētir],
 7 and with javelins and . .[. . . from evening]
 8 up to day-break they were howling. From [evening]
 9 up to day-break Nabû-šum-imbi, son of Ēda-ētir, commander of Borsippa [. . .

- 10 . . .]. . . prayed, "Nabû, my are no more! [. . .
 11 . . .]. . . .[. . .

[about thirty lines missing]

Column IIb

- 1 . . .]. their [. . .
 2 . . .] [. . .
 3 . . .]. . .[. . .]. burnt . .[. . .
 4 . . .]. . abundance and to [. . .
 5 . . .]. the storehouse [. . .
 6 . . .] Nabû-šum-imbi, son of Ēda-ētir, commander of [Borsippa . . .
 7 . . .] who reverences him, who stands at [his] service [. . .
 8 . . .] of his great [godhead], let them speak [. . .
 9 . . .]. may he hear. Peace, divine favour [. . .
 10 [may he] grant him [as a gift] and [donate to him] as a donation [. . .
 11 [May . . .]. . . mistress of goddesses [. . .
 12 . . .]. the merciful goddess, creatress [of . . .
 13 . . .]. whose word is favourable, whose utterance
 14 [cannot be changed], whose command cannot be altered [. . .
 15 in the presence of [. . .]., who issues decrees concerning heaven and [under-
 world . . .
 16 son of the Enlil [of the gods], may she daily take my part [. . .
 17 may I have increase of [. . .] distant days, [far off] years [. . .
 18 health of shining [. . . .] for a gift [. . .
 19 offspring, may I [. . .] descendants [. . .
 20 In the palace [. . .]. may her word be favourable [. . .
 21 Together with Ezida [and] Borsippa may [his] shepherding be secure [. . .
 22 may his words be acceptable to the king of the gods, the lord of lords; [may his]
 walk [. . . Ezida]
 23 and Borsippa in the presence of Nabû and Nanai, the great gods [. . .
 24 may he reach a ripe old age. In warfare, strife, mighty battle and campaigning
 [. . .
 25 he, [his] offspring, his [. . .] to go to his aid, to fell the [. . .
 26 may he fill his hands with abundance . .[. .] and much wealth . .[. . .
 27 and at the [stroke] of Erra, the wise, beloved son of Enlil, the mighty (?) [. . .
 28 his [. .]. . dagger, may peace be established for him/it. [May he succeed]
 in extinguishing
 29 the wicked enemies like a flame, [may he praise] your godhead and greatness
 30 to future generations. You, lord, be his help [. . .
 31 exalt him that [he may sing your] praises for the days of eternity [. . .
 32 the prayers and petitions of Nabû-šum-imbi, commander of Borsippa, Nabû[. . .
 33 Inscription relating to the storehouse, from the wall of Ezida.

Philological Notes

- Ia 2 Ninsigga occurs again in *RA* 41 36 19, in the middle of a list of Gula names. For the meaning of *šagapu/iru* note *Mal'ku* I 30: *ša-ga-pi-ru* = *gar-ra-du* (*JAOS* 83 425).
 Ib 6 Of the meanings of *urāšu* (see Meissner, *AS* 4 no. 11) at least three are conceivable here: "house," "garden," and "an official." However, in the lack of more context the first present writer and A. R. Millard, note on I 16.

of these seems preferable, cf. *Maluku* I 257: *ú-ra-šú = bi-i-tu* (*JAOS* 83 429).

Ib 12 *rēdû* here seems strange, and elsewhere a phrase *rēšu mutninnû* occurs (*BWL* 331 note on rev. IV 21), but only substantial emendation will secure that here.

IIa 1 6 Note both *kîma* and *-iš*, and similarly both *ina* and *-šu* (for *-šum*) with *ina mûši-šumma*. This pleonastic use of "hymno-epic" endings is at least as old as the Code of Hammurabi, cf. *ina balûm*.

IIb 24 *littûtu* is explained as reaching 90 years in *STT* II 400 47: 90 = *lit-tu-tum*.

IIb 28 Cf. *Erra* V 58 (*Iraq* 24 124).

The second text given here is in many respects unique. It was found at Khorsabad by the expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in 1932, yet it is in Babylonian script and is a private document. On each side there is a prayer, followed by a rubric and instructions to recite it twice. The obverse has an eleven line prayer to Marduk, the reverse one of ten lines to

Nabû. Both specify Nabû-ušebši, an otherwise unknown private person, as the one on whose behalf the prayer to Marduk asks for offspring, and that to Nabû for long life. It seems that the prayers represent private literary activity done on commission, or by the author for himself. They are quite different from the many short incantation prayers which served for private persons, and they have a range of vocabulary not ordinarily expended on a personal item. This extends even to the instruction to recite the prayers twice (note *miḫiltu* "inscription"). As to date, the ranking together of Marduk and Nabû strongly supports a first millennium date, and with this the stylistic sophistication agrees. This consists in substituting learned words for their ordinary equivalents. "Slave" is *dušmû*, not *ardu*; "heaven and underworld" is *ašru u kigallu*, not *šamê u eršetim*; "life" is *šaṭāpu*, not *balātu*. The instruction on recitation is a learned but most clumsy circumlocution. The tablet is published here by kind permission of Professor I. J. Gelb.

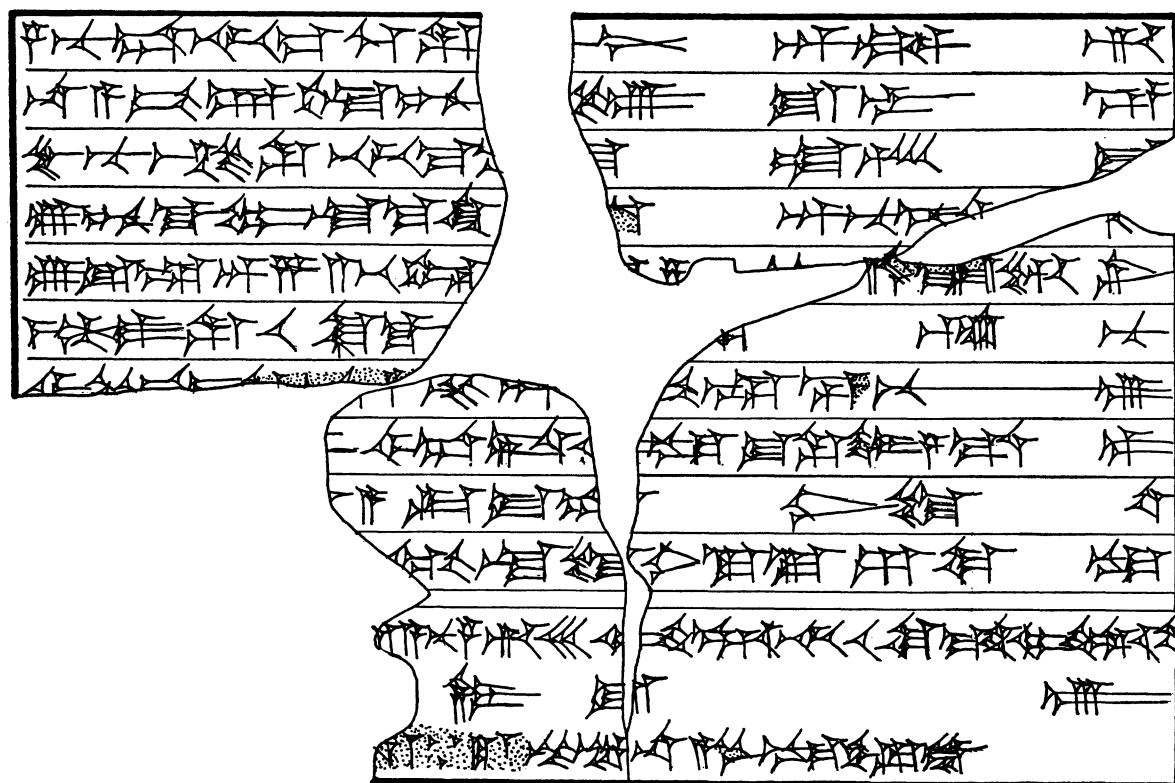
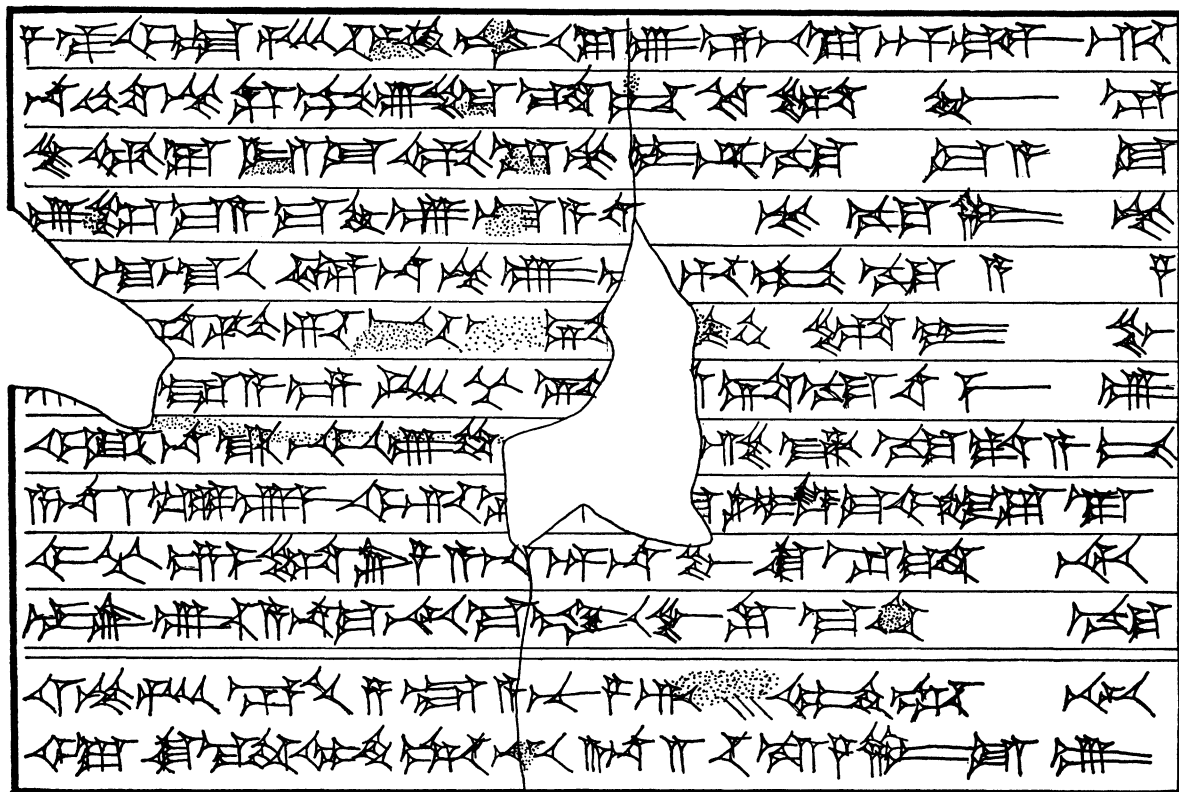
Khorsabad 1932, 26

Obverse

| | | |
|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | šá-áš-ši abbē ^{mes} -šú mut-lel-lu-ú | <i>e-tel-lu</i> ^d asar-re |
| 2 | na-din u ₄ -mu ru-qu-ú-tu | et-pe-šú te-le- ^e |
| 3 | bu-ul-lu-tu šu-ul-lu-mu | i-tuk-ka ba-a-šu |
| 4 | ú-šar-ba-a ba- ² -ú-la-a-tú | šum-ka as-mu |
| 5 | ú ¹ -la-la u dun-na-mu-ú | ú ¹ -paq-qu ka-a-šá |
| 6 | [še-ma-t]a ik-ri- ¹ bi ¹ -šú-n[u] | ta-[na]m-din li-i-pu |
| 7 | u[š-tab]-ra-a niš ⁱ ^{mes} māti | t[a-ni]t-ta-ka u ₄ -me-šam |
| 8 | ši-kin na-piš-ti ú-ša[r-ra-ḫa] | zi-kir-ka ṭa-a-bi |
| 9 | a-na ^{md} nabû (nà)-ú-šeb-ši re-e-[š ⁱ m]u[t-ni]n-ni-i | lib-ba-ši šu-lu-lu |
| 10 | ši-mat niš ⁱ ^{me} li-ir-šá-a | na-an-na-bu ki-si-it-ti |
| 11 | pi-ir-ú-šú a-na ma-ti-ma | lil-bu-ru ma-ḫar-ka |
| 12 | 11 šumāt ⁱ ^{mes} e-liš za-ra-a là šakna re-eš mi-ḫi-il-ti | |
| 13 | ù qí-it mi-ḫi-il-ti a-na šini-šú iš-šá-as-su-ú | |

Reverse

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | šá-nu-du ti-iz-qa-ru | [b]u-kúr ^d asar-re |
| 2 | na-a-bi kal mim-ma šum-[šú | še-m]u-ú su-pe-e |
| 3 | bu-nu nam-ru-ti | ma-l[i-k]u abbē ^{mes} -š[u] |
| 4 | ú-šum-gal-lum la ma-ḫar | [api]l([ibil]a) ^d nu-dim-[m]u[d] |
| 5 | ú-su-um ^d i-gi-gi be-el [né-me-q]i | ḫ[a-mi-m]u gi-mir uz-ni |
| 6 | šip-kát áš-ru u ki-gal-[lu | qa-tuk-k]a kun-nu |
| 7 | š ⁱ -mat dum-qi ta-šá ¹ -mu | ^d [na-b]i-um e/si-nu-ú |
| 8 | [a-na ^{md} nabû (nà)-ú-š]eb-ši du-uš-m[i]-ka | šu-ru-uk šá-ṭa-pa |
| 9 | [ba-la-ṭa liš-b]a-a | lik-šu-du lit-tu-tú |
| 10 | [x x x x ku]-ul-la-tu | lid-lu-lu qur-di-ka |



- 11 [10 *šumāti*^{meš} *e-liš za-r*] *a-a lā šakna re-eš mi-ḫi-il-ti u qí-it mi-ḫi-il-tú*
 12 [*a-na šini-šú iš-šá*]-*as-su-ú*

Colophon

- 13 . . .] x x ^d*nabû*¹ (*nà*) ?-*šum-iddina* (*sì-na*) *mār(a)* ^{1a}*ka-nik bābi*

Obverse

- 1 Sun of his fathers, exalted, the noble Asare,
 2 The giver of length of days, skilled, learned,
 3 It is in your sphere to keep alive and to preserve,
 4 Mankind extols your fitting name.
 5 The afflicted and the oppressed heed you,
 6 You [heed] their prayer, you grant offspring,
 7 The peoples of the land persist every day in praising you,
 8 All living creatures magnify your sweet name.
 9 Let there be protection for Nabû-ušebši, the reverent supplicant,
 10 That he may get progeny and descendants, as is decreed for the peoples,
 11 That his seed may be established before you for ever.
 12 Eleven lines lacking The beginning of the inscription
 13 and the end of the inscription shall be recited twice.

Reverse

- 1 Hero, lofty, son of Asare,
 2 Creator of everything that exists, hearer of prayer,
 3 Of shining countenance, counsellor of his fathers,
 4 Irresistible autocrat, heir of Nudimmud,
 5 Most fitting of the Igigi, lord of [wisdom], who [comprehends] all learning,
 6 The fashioning of heaven and underworld is established in your [hand],
 7 You decree a favoured destiny, O . . . Nabû,
 8 Give long life [to Nabû]-ušebši, your slave,
 9 That he may enjoy [good health] and reach a ripe old age,
 10 That all [. . . .] may praise your prowess in war.
 11 [Ten lines] lacking [. . .]. . The beginning of the inscription and the end
 of the inscription
 12 [Shall be] recited [twice].
 Colophon: . . .] Nabû (?) -*šum-iddina*, son of the Doorman.

Philological Notes

- Obv. 1 *šašši abbēšu* as a title of Marduk results from exegesis of his name ^d*amar.utu* "bull-calf of Utu." The tortuous process is explained in the author's forthcoming *Babylonian Creation Myths*.
 Obv. 9 For *rēši mutninnû* see the note on BM 33428 Ib 12 above.
 Obv. 11 On first millennium tablets *libur* "grow old" and *libûr* "be established" interchange, but the phenomenon has not yet been adequately explained.
 Obv. 12, rev. 11 This further example of *zarû* in colophons (the others are given in *CAD* under *zarû* B) at least proves that this is not only an Assyrian scribal term, though the meaning is still unknown.